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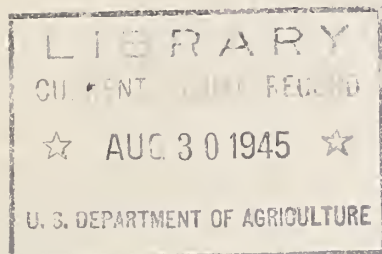
Foreign Crops and MARKETS



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CANADA ADOPTS FARM PRICE MEASURE

On July 31, 1944, the Canadian House of Commons approved the Agricultural Prices Support Bill, which had been introduced into Parliament on July 25 by that country's Minister of Agriculture. The Act takes effect as of the date of formal signature by the Dominion's Governor General.

The new measure provides for the support of prices of all agricultural products with the exception of wheat, the latter already being supported under other legislation. It authorizes a three-man Board to support prices, either by purchase and subsequent resale, or by making deficiency payments to make up the difference between average market prices and established floor prices. A fund of \$200,000,000 is made available for that purpose.

The Act prescribes no specific formula for determining the level at which floor prices are to be established. It merely directs the Board to endeavor "to insure adequate and stable returns for agriculture by promoting orderly adjustments from war to peace conditions" and "to secure a fair relationship between the returns from agriculture and those from other occupations."

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CANADIAN HOG PRODUCTION AND BACON EXPORTS AT RECORD LEVELS

Canadian hog numbers and bacon exports at present are at an all-time peak and indications are that the Dominion will be able to maintain hog marketings at the current high level for the next 12 months. The good grain crops now developing will insure more abundant feed supplies in the west, while producers in the east will be less dependent upon outside feed supplies than they were last year when subsidized shipments of grain from western Canada were necessary.

The size of the spring pig crop is not definitely known as yet, but it will probably be somewhat smaller than the record spring crop of 1943, when 6,189,000 pigs were saved. Summer and fall farrowings this year, however, are likely to be large. The total number of pigs saved from the spring and fall crops last year was 13,058,000, an increase of 22 percent above 1942.

CANADA: Spring and fall pig crops, 1938-1943

YEAR	: PIGS SAVED PRECEDING 6 MONTHS		
	: JUNE 1 :	DEC. 1 :	TOTAL
	: Thousands: Thousands: Thousands		
1938	2,821.9 :	2,801.4 :	5,623.3
1939	3,640.5 :	3,725.6 :	7,366.1
1940	5,073.2 :	4,775.2 :	9,848.4
1941	4,997.3 :	4,516.5 :	9,513.8
1942	5,449.7 :	5,249.8 :	10,699.5
1943	6,188.6 :	6,868.9 :	13,057.5

Official sources.

Although the spring pig crop this year may be smaller than in 1943, it is believed that the reduction was not as great as indicated in the December 1, 1943, intentions report. At the time that survey was made, there was widespread dissatisfaction with the feed and hog price relationship, as well as with the British bacon contract, which had been reduced to 900 million pounds for a 2-year period, compared with 675 million pounds contracted for the single year 1943.

A sequence of developments occurred after the intentions report was released, which may have modified the hog-breeding program somewhat. Following the December 1 survey there was a period of several weeks during which western packing plants refused to buy sows because their facilities were overtaxed, thus forcing some farmers to retain them on farms. Early in January a federal hog bonus plan was announced, which

revived interest in hog raising and increased the demand for breeding stock, particularly in eastern Canada. The payment of bonuses for high-quality hogs delivered at inspected plants has been very effective in diverting hogs from farm and local slaughter to the Government inspected plants from which all purchases of export bacon are made.

Inspected slaughter increased 57 percent during the first half of 1944, the total exceeding 5 million head. This increase was especially significant in view of the fact that meat rationing, as well as all controls over uninspected slaughter, had been abandoned. Farm and local (uninspected) slaughter was unusually large in the last half of 1942 and in 1943, regardless of various attempts to control it and divert hogs to the inspected plants. Many hogs apparently were marketed outside regular channels where ceiling prices were enforced.

All previous records for inspected slaughter have been exceeded this year. In the first 6 months the slaughter goal for the entire year was 73 percent completed, and by July 15 the minimum purchases required for export under this year's bacon agreement were 96 percent fulfilled.

Taking into account the unusually large exports of bacon so far this year, it is expected that the total for the year may almost equal the minimum commitment of 900 million pounds fixed under the agreement with the United Kingdom for the 2-year period, 1944 and 1945. Thus, Canada, at the present rate, is furnishing Britain with supplies of bacon approximately equal to the yearly average imported by the latter from all countries during the years 1935-1939.

The great expansion in the hog industry in Canada since the beginning of the war made it possible for the Canadian consumers

to have more pork than in the pre-war period, notwithstanding greatly increased exports. Per capita consumption of pork in 1943 rose to 66 pounds, which was 15 percent more than in 1942 and 64 percent above the average for the 5 years, 1935-1939.

A large share of the 125-percent increase in pork production above pre-war has gone into exports, which increased more than 227 percent over the 5 pre-war years, 1935-1939. Domestic consumption increased 75 percent.

Based on reports from the American Embassy at Ottawa.

CANADA: Estimates of hog slaughter and pork production and consumption, average 1935-1939, annual 1940-1943

YEAR	SLAUGHTER (NET) a/			PRODUCTION:	CONSUMPTION: PER CAPITA	
	INSPECTED	OTHER	TOTAL		b/	CONSUMPTION
	: 1,000 : : head :	: 1,000 : : head :	: 1,000 : : head :	: Million : : pounds :	: Million : : pounds :	: Pounds
Average 1935-1939 ...:	3,390	1,775	5,165	621	445	40.3
1940	5,457	1,780	7,237	865	533	46.8
1941	6,280	2,230	8,510	1,056	569	49.4
1942	6,197	3,086	9,283	1,188	668	57.3
1943	7,174	3,377	10,551	1,394	779	66.0

Dominion Bureau of Statistics, July 19, 1944.

a/ Sales and farm slaughter adjusted for exports and imports of live animals.

b/ Edible meat, excluding lard and offals.

PERU'S 1944 FLAX CROP REDUCED

Peruvian flax production this year may barely exceed 2,000,000 pounds of "line" fiber and 3,000,000 pounds of tow fiber, compared with the peak production in 1942 of 7,900,000 pounds of "line" fiber and about 15,000,000 pounds of tow fiber. The 1944 flax program was no doubt influenced both by disappointing results in 1943 and by the accumulation of fiber and tow within the country. Exports for several years have been considerably less than anticipated, due principally to a shortage of shipping space. Increase in production was rapid after the first commercial crop was grown, but recent results have not measured up to expectations.

Tests made by the Agricultural Experiment Station at La Molina in 1934 gave the first indications that flax might be grown successfully in Peru. An official flax commission was established in 1939 to promote commercial production of fiber of acceptable market quality, and many farmers were hopeful that flax could be grown in localities where cotton had recently been giving increasingly disappointing yields.

The first crop, in 1939, amounted to about 161,000 pounds of "line" fiber and 198,000 pounds of tow fiber. That year pure seed of good quality from Sweden was furnished by the Government. In addition, cash subsidies were provided to enable farmers to plant and harvest the crop, and plantings were supervised by experienced personnel of the Experiment Station. The area chosen was

675 acres in the Pativilca and Supe Valleys. Government funds were used for the erection of a retting and scutching mill, and scutching machinery was brought from Belgium for the processing of the fiber. Weather conditions were favorable, the crop was comparatively free from insect and other damage, and yields were good.

About 112,000 pounds of seed were imported from Sweden for the 1940 crop. Flax was planted on considerably more land in the Pativilca district and extended on a trial basis into the Castete Valley. Results again were good, though average yields dropped considerably below the preceding year.

Two years of favorable flax crops and an appreciable increase in price, together with the uncertainty of cotton yields and the loss of European cotton markets because

of the war, resulted in the planting in 1941 of more than 14 times as much flax as in 1940. There was insufficient good seed for so large an acreage, although some was imported from Canada, Chile, and Argentina, besides the 336,000 pounds from the United States. Other seed used was that saved from the 1940 crop. Most of the farms are small, and the increased acreage was obtained mostly through the efforts of farmers who had not grown the crop previously. Planting extended from April through August, some made too early and some too late for best results. Disease and insects constituted an added hazard. As a result, the yield in 1941 was only 161 pounds of fiber per acre. An attractive price, however, helped to keep up interest in the growing of the crop.

The flax acreage of 1942 was the largest ever planted in Peru. About 3,250,000 pounds of seed were imported, mostly from the United States, and the rest from Canada, Argentina, and Chile. Measures also were taken to limit planting to the most favorable time in each valley, and to encourage improved growing methods. The average yield per acre was only a little better than in the preceding year, because of exceptionally damp, misty weather and the increasingly serious problem of disease.

The 1943 crop was grown in a number of valleys but the area totalled only 27,600 acres. Domestically grown seed, principally from Huancayo and Huaraz, was used, along with less than 350,000 pounds of foreign seed imported for this crop. The yield that year increased to 192 pounds per acre, owing principally to the newly planted areas in the sierra region.

Flax acreage by valleys, 1943

VALLEY

Coastal region	Acres
Cajete	5,930
Chincha and Pisco	4,150
Barranca, Pativilca, and Supe	3,560
Lima	3,040
Ica	2,970
Chancay	1,850
Trujillo	890
Huarmey, Casma, and Chimbote..	740
Total	23,130
Sierra region	
Jauja and Huancayo	2,220
Tarma	1,480
Others	750
Total	4,450
Total flax acreage	27,580

There are now 46 scutching mills in Peru, but 24 of them have only small capacity. Some of the larger farms have their own mills, but many flax growers depend on hiring their scutching done by individuals who use their mills especially for job work. Harvest comes in the later months of the calendar year. Scutched fiber of one year's crop does not appear on the market in appreciable quantities until early in the following year.

A shipment of about 2,300 pounds from the first crop was sent to Belgium for quality tests. Since then practically all of the exports have been to the United States under contract with the Commodity Credit Corporation. About 1,000 pounds of fiber in 1941 and 34,000 in 1942 were shipped to Chile. Flax tow shipments to Chile amounted to about 400 pounds in 1941, 230,000 in 1942, and a large share of the 1943 exports.

PERU: Flax acreage, production, and exports, 1939-1943

YEAR	AREA	FIBER PRODUCTION	YIELD PER ACRE		EXPORTS	
			STRAW	FIBER	FIBER	TOW
	Acres	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds
1939	675	161,000	3,165	239	-	-
1940	2,600	505,000	2,825	192	168	200
1941	37,100	5,972,000	2,492	161	705	1,000
1942	39,100	7,907,000	2,454	177	5,256	5,500
1943	27,600	4,850,000	2,944	192	4,485	300

Compiled from consular reports.

The future of flax growing in Peru holds several problems that await solution. Crops have been grading lower in quality than was hoped. Disease has caused crop failures in some valleys. Flax needs another crop to be grown with it, and so far a satisfactory plan of rotation has not been worked out. Growers along the coast have

reduced acreage considerably, and only limited areas in the sierra are suitable for the crop. A crop of high yield is needed for small farms, especially those in the Peruvian coastal areas. Cotton has been a popular crop and is again being planted by farmers who have been discouraged by the problems involved in the growing of flax.

Cecille M. Protzman

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA BECOMES SEED PRODUCER

The Union of South Africa, like many other countries, until the world conflict cut off supplies, depended upon the commercial-seed-producing countries for seed supplies. Since seeds mean food, and no country can maintain food supplies without seeds, the Union had to take steps to assure adequate supplies. The United States was the logical source, so imports by the Union from this country were greatly increased. The United States, however, was also trying to supply other Allies and to increase production sufficiently to meet the growing civilian demands. Consequently, the Union was not always able to secure the needed quantities nor, frequently, the right kinds.

Because of the rather inadequate supplies obtainable in the United States, and with most other sources of seeds cut off, the Union turned to the encouragement of domestic production. There had been some seed production, dating back to the first settlers. That, however, had not been of great importance at any time, and with the influx of new settlers the demand was for seeds of crops to which they were accustomed in the mother country. Hence, little encouragement was given to production of seed of unfamiliar crops.

Seed production is a business demanding skill and knowledge. Only a few seed growers had these important prerequisites for success, and so local production lagged and, until this wartime emergency, did not receive official encouragement. During World War I domestic production of vegetable seeds was given some encouragement, and substantial quantities were produced. It looked as though the Union could become a seed producer, but the world-wide depression following the war brought in seed supplies from European producers at prices far below the costs of production obtaining in South Africa. This ruinous competition soon curtailed domestic production, and the major portion of vegetable-seed supplies was again imported.

When World War II produced a similar

scarcity of seeds, and food supplies were threatened, the Union took steps to encourage production, just when American seed producers were looking upon the Union as a possible after-the-war market. Production of seeds in the United States had been doubled to meet wartime needs. The production of some kinds trebled and even quadrupled. Naturally, the producers were wondering as to the possibility of obtaining and holding foreign markets after the war. If they could establish a reputation for American seeds during the war, would not this give them a chance at a post-war market?

The Union of South Africa had faced two serious shortages, and each time developed local production to meet serious needs. Seeds meant food, and food was an all-important commodity, without which they must suffer. So local encouragement was forthcoming. At first, the production of chicory was started to replace supplies formerly obtained from the Low Countries. Chicory is the all-important coffee supplement used in the Union. Seed potatoes, formerly imported from England, also had to be replaced by local production. The cost of transportation of this seed is very high and shipping losses even under normal conditions are severe. In wartime they are unbelievable. The Union has been reasonably successful in its efforts to step up the

production of seed potatoes in spite of climatic conditions, which are not especially favorable for the production of virus-free stock. Hope is held that superior strains may be bred, which will make the Union less dependent on seed imported from Scotland and Canada, and that domestic seed growers will produce larger supplies of high-quality seed. The 28 cooperative seed-potato producing associations are working closely with the Department of Forestry and Agriculture toward their goal.

Peanuts are another important South African crop, and with supplies of seed severely curtailed a reduction in this crop, commonly spoken of as "groundnuts," seemed inevitable. With careful study of cultural problems, however, plus the development of a local variety, "Natal Common," continued production now seems assured. While the domestic variety may not achieve the popularity of "Virginia Bunching," which depends upon its adaptability to available picking and shelling equipment, it has already established its greater resistance to the "nut-rot" disease. Also, its resistance to the "bacterial wilt" in the lowveld of the Transvaal and on the Natal Coast makes it superior to the Virginia Bunching. The Cooperative Society handling the marketing of groundnuts is assisting the production program, and it seems assured of success.

Much research work has been done at the various experiment stations in an effort to produce disease-resistant, locally adapted varieties of the small grains, corn, and the grain sorghums. In spite of this valuable work, some farmers still plant unknown or unproved varieties; consequently, their crops oftentimes suffer due to lack of drought resistance, susceptibility to disease, and because they are not adapted to South African soil and climatic conditions. Wartime conditions, however, have focused attention upon these problems and have resulted in wide publicity to suitable varieties already available. South African grain production should benefit from the absence of outside sources of seed. Vegetable production, however, was seriously threatened when the normal sources of seed supplies were cut off.

The shortage of vegetable seeds in the Union was critical during the early part of the war period. Expanded domestic production and increased imports from the United States have largely overcome the threatened shortages. The United States, however, does not produce a number of the kinds and many of the varieties that are preferred by South African growers. Cape Spitz cabbage, cauliflower, onion, and pumpkin were locally grown, it is true, but an unwarranted prejudice and low-cost imported seeds prevented the development of a seed industry in the Union. No doubt, local seed producers lack the skill and knowledge necessary for the production of high-quality seeds. Growers, because of the low cost of the imported seeds, were unwilling to bother with uncertain locally produced seeds. Now that local seeds are being forced into the hands of the crop growers, because of the absence of imported seeds, this prejudice may be largely overcome.

American seed exporters will be disappointed in this situation, since they have in the past years built up a fairly sizable export business. In the calendar year 1939, exports of vegetable seeds from the United States to the Union totaled a little over 54,000 pounds. This volume has increased several fold since then, and with a high level of United States seed production, could be greatly expanded. It is probable that with recently gained experience and improved methods of production, American seed growers on a cost basis could compete successfully with South African producers, were it not for the special varieties which are favored there. The variety problem is not too serious though, judging by the list of recommended varieties of the various kinds of vegetables recently issued by the South African Department of Agriculture and Forestry, a considerable number of which appear in the average American catalog.

While statistics of production are lacking, it is evident that the Union no longer finds it necessary to maintain the pre-war level of imports, approximating 600-800 tons of vegetable seeds annually. In fact, if we are to judge by the official estimates of the seed position in January of

this year, imports will be necessary for only a limited number of kinds of vegetable seeds. Celery, cucumber, eggplant, kohlrabi, lettuce, melons, parsley, parsnip, radish, tomato, and turnip were the only ones for which the local production was less than estimated requirements. Local production of beans, peas, and carrots was expected to be ample to meet domestic needs.

This progress has been obtained through cooperation between the Division of Horticulture and the Seedsmen's Association of South Africa. Seed-growing contracts have been developed and have served to induce the small group of seed growers, who have persisted for many years in spite of the competition with foreign-grown seeds, to expand their activities. They have been assured of fixed prices for their crops and have received the advice and guidance of technicians. These two incentives have gone a long way to help seed producers, but more important, through Government supervision they are permitted to sell their product under the distinctive label of "Government Approved." This label has received considerable publicity both as to its meaning and through demonstration plots, so that the

domestically produced seed is now in a favored position on the market. This program has helped to step up local production, thereby reducing the demand for imported seeds.

Whether or not the program will continue to be successful in the face of low-cost imported seeds after the war depends upon many considerations. If imported seeds have high quality as to germination, purity, and desirable varietal characteristics along with low cost, there may be some doubt as to the ability of South African seeds to monopolize the market. On the other hand, if the imported seeds are not of the desirable varieties, locally produced seed will have an advantage. Seeds usually account for only a small part of the cost of producing crops. Few intelligent growers will risk the few cents saved by purchasing cheap seed against the possible loss of a valuable crop. Thus it would seem reasonable to deduce that those seed exporters who cater to a discriminating market and who produce high-quality seeds as economically as possible are not worrying too greatly over the possible loss of their seed market in the Union of South Africa.

W. H. Youngman

LATE COMMODITY DEVELOPMENTS

GRAINS, GRAIN PRODUCTS, AND FEEDS

EGYPTIAN WHEAT HARVEST REDUCED

The 1944 wheat crop in Egypt, harvesting of which was recently completed, is estimated at around 36.1 million bushels compared with 47.5 million bushels last year. At that level the crop would not only be below expectations but also the smallest since 1924. This year's crop was grown on a somewhat smaller area than the 1,917,000 acres harvested in 1943, according to current reports.

Based on present acreage and production indications, the yield per acre is one of the smallest ever recorded in Egypt. The

low yields are attributed to a number of factors, principally unfavorable weather, a shortage of fertilizer, and nonrotation of crops. The Government's wartime decree relative to the use of the land is said to make normal rotation of crops impossible. The labor shortage is also believed to have contributed to the reduced wheat crop.

About 2.7 million bushels of the estimated crop will be required for seed and about 7.0 million bushels probably will be found to be below milling quality. This would leave around 26 million bushels available for food. Consumption needs, however, are estimated to average around 38 million bushels. The resulting deficit will have to be made up through imports, or in a further reduction of the wheat content of the war

bread. Effective April 1, this year, the composition of bread flour in Egypt was fixed at two-thirds wheat and one-third corn. This replaced a former mixture of 90 percent wheat flour of 95-percent extraction, and 10 percent barley flour of 62.5-percent extraction.

CANADA ANNOUNCES 1944-45 WHEAT PRICES

There will be no change in the price paid to Canadian producers of spring wheat during the crop year which began August 1, but durum prices are to be slightly lower than during the 1943-44 year, according to a recently announced price schedule. The Canadian Wheat Board set the price of No. 1 Hard and No. 1 Northern at the same rate as last year, \$1.25 per bushel (Canadian currency) basis Fort William-Port Arthur or Vancouver. Other grades continue at the 1943-44 rates: No. 2, \$1.22; No. 3, \$1.20; No. 4, \$1.15; and No. 5, \$1.10. No. 1 C.W. Amber Durum, however, is quoted at \$1.25 compared with \$1.30 per bushel during the past season, with other grades of durum also lower than last year's rates. Winter wheat growers of Ontario are also guaranteed a minimum price of \$1.25 per bushel for No. 1 Ontario, basis Montreal, with the ceiling price of \$1.26 continuing.

VENEZUELA INCREASES RICE PRODUCTION

The Venezuelan rice crop, about to be harvested, is forecast between 1,075,000 and 1,225,000 bushels, compared with 882,000 bushels a year ago. The Government in recent years has been responsible for a marked increase in the rice production of that country. Before the war, production was negligible, but rice imports, which averaged about 35 million pounds during 1938-1942, are now replaced by domestic production.

The Government has endeavored to intensify cultivation on areas previously producing rice and to plant rice on land where conditions, types of soil, and economic factors permitted its introduction. It also has encouraged the industry by granting

credits and machinery, by providing a technical advisory office, and by establishing a new rice mill. Select Rexoro and Fortuna seed has been provided, two types imported from the United States which are becoming popular in Venezuela.

LARGE RICE CROP FORECAST IN PANAMA

Prospects for a bumper 1944 rice crop in Panama are excellent. A vigorous Governmental policy designed to stimulate rice cultivation and favorable climatic conditions have contributed to a large production. A rice shortage, the direct result of a short crop caused by the drought last year, has presented a serious problem in recent months. Negotiations were completed for rice imports from Ecuador until this year's domestic production is available. The rice harvest will begin in August and September.

ARGENTINA AUTHORIZES EXPORTS OF OILCAKE AND MEAL

Exports of oilcake and meal from Argentina are authorized under conditions set forth in a decree dated June 15, 1944, which cancels the decree of May 11, 1943, prohibiting such exports. The provisions of the measure permit export of cake and meal under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Agriculture after domestic requirements have been assured. Exports may be made from stocks belonging to the Regulating Board of Agricultural Production, or from private production, or purchases in the local markets, upon payment to the Board of an export fee of 2.50 pesos per 100 kilograms or such fee as may in future be set by the Ministry. Sales to foreign countries prior to the decree, for which permits have been granted as exceptions to the decree prohibiting exports, are not subject to the fee payments.

Considerable quantities of linseed cake and meal are expected to be available as the result of the heavy crushing program in Argentina. Governmental encouragement of crushing of sunflower seed and peanuts is

also expected to increase available stocks of cake and meal. In view of the fuel situation, however, a large part of the cake and meal is being burned in industrial plants and will not be available for export for feed.

VEGETABLE OILS AND OILSEEDS

OILSEED CROP IN URUGUAY NEAR RECORD LEVEL

The oilseed crops harvested in Uruguay early this year were near record levels as a result of favorable weather conditions and high yields. The area planted to sunflower seed was increased by 90 percent over that for 1943 and flaxseed by 2 percent, but peanut acreage was reduced by 30 percent. Severe drought in 1943 caused a drop in both acreage and production of sunflower seed and peanuts.

URUGUAY: Acreage and production of oilseed crops, 1943-44 with comparisons				
CROP	AVERAGE: 1936-40:	1941-42:	1942-43:	1943-44
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Acreage	acres	acres	acres	acres
Flaxseed ...	429	210	337	345
Sunflower	:	:	:	:
seed	79	1,47	70	132
Peanuts	9	19	17	12
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Production	bushels	bushels	bushels	bushels
Flaxseed ...	3,727	1,847	1,808	3,896
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Sunflower	pounds	pounds	pounds	pounds
seed	34,351	73,091	12,667	88,995
Peanuts	4,018	12,703	3,933	9,751
Compiled from official sources and current consular reports.				

There was no carry-over from the low 1943 crop of peanuts and sunflower seed, and the 1944 crop is expected to be consumed locally as in past years. No carry-over of flaxseed was reported, but the surplus available for export in 1944 as flaxseed and oil (in terms of seed) is estimated at nearly 3,300,000 bushels. This figure is more than double the 1943 exports of 1,481,000

bushels of flaxseed and 1,973,000 pounds of linseed oil or a total of 1,585,000 bushels in terms of seed. Domestic requirements for flaxseed during the past 10 years have averaged about 374,000 bushels for seeding and 236,000 for industrial uses.

FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND NUTS

PALESTINE HAS GOOD CITRUS CROP

The 1943-44 citrus crop of Palestine amounted to a total of around 9,000,000 boxes, or about 80 percent more than the preceding year. The increase is attributed to favorable weather conditions for setting of fruit, unusual absence of hot, dry winds, and improved cultivation of groves. The crop consisted of 7,900,000 boxes of Jaffa oranges, 500,000 boxes of Valencia oranges, and 800,000 boxes of grapefruit. It was estimated that local consumption would account for 2,250,000 boxes, sales to the Army and exports around 2,000,000 boxes, and that about 1,000,000 boxes would be processed into citrus products. The 1944-45 crop is estimated at between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 boxes. Weather conditions during flowering and setting of the fruit were unfavorable.

PANAMA BANANA ACTIVITY INCREASED

There are signs of increased activity in the banana industry in Panama, due to the increasing availability of shipping facilities. Growers on the Atlantic side now are utilizing space in refrigerated ships that bring perishable foodstuffs to the Canal Zone. It is also the intention of a prominent merchant to use his own ships for the transportation of bananas to New Orleans and Florida. On the Pacific side, the United Fruit Company has resumed operations and hopes to export 80,000 bunches monthly. The fruit will be transported in refrigerated ships to California. Normally Panama exported around 5,500,000 bunches of bananas annually. In 1943 exports amounted to only 945,000 bunches compared with 2,369,000 in 1942 and 5,669,000 in 1941.

CUBAN VEGETABLE SHIPMENTS TO UNITED STATES

Shipments of Cuban fresh vegetables to the United States during the 1943-44 season amounted to 23,245,000 cases compared with 7,334,000 cases in 1942-43 and 48,290,000 in 1941-42. The shipping season extends from November to June.

FRESH VEGETABLES: Shipments from Habana to United States, 1941-42 to 1943-44

COMMODITY	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44
	1,000	1,000	1,000
	pounds	pounds	pounds
Tomatoes ..	30,266	5,894	20,548
Egg plant ..	5,656	226	283
Peppers ...	3,432	468	49
Okra	1,332	108	293
Lima beans :	3,502	0	0
Cucumbers ..	3,157	118	771
Potatoes ..	200	0	0
Others	745	520	1,301
Total ...	48,290	7,334	23,245

Official sources.

CANADIAN BEAN AND PEA ACREAGE ESTIMATE ANNOUNCED

The Canadian acreage of dry beans is officially estimated at 87,900 acres compared with 85,200 acres in 1943. The July 1 condition figure for Ontario, the principal bean-producing Province, is given at 97 compared with 74 last year.

The 1944 area of dry peas is estimated at 101,600 acres, which is also above last year's 91,700 acres. The July 1 condition figure for Ontario peas is given at 95, which is materially above last year's 71.

Effective July 10, a uniform ceiling price replaced individual seller's ceiling for all kinds, varieties, and grades of dry whole and split peas. Processors' maximum selling price per 98-pound bag f.o.b. plant, is fixed at \$7.00 for large yellow (Marrow-fat type) or green or blue whole peas, \$5.90 for medium yellow or small yellow whole peas, \$8.50 for green or blue split peas, and \$7.40 for yellow split peas. A charge of 10 cents per bag may be added if the processor sells through a broker. These

prices and the permitted mark-ups should cause no increase in consumer prices in most localities and should provide growers a return approximately equal to the \$3.25 per bushel now obtained for peas, f.o.b. seaboard.

IRAN ALMOND CROP LOWER

The 1944-45 almond crop in Iran is expected to amount to around 6,600 short tons. Of that quantity 5,300 tons will be shelled and 1,300 unshelled nuts. This compares with a total of 8,800 tons (7,000 shelled and 1,800 unshelled) in 1943-44 and 6,600 tons (5,300 shelled and 1,300 unshelled) in 1942-43. The anticipated smaller crop in 1944-45 is attributed to unfavorable weather conditions. Stocks of almonds are estimated at around 1,650 tons. Prior to the war only about one-eighth of the total crop was consumed within this country. Domestic consumption now is estimated at one-half of the total crop. This is due to the fact that the usual foreign outlets no longer are available.

SUGAR

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF 1944 CUBAN SUGAR CROP

The 1944 Cuban sugar crop, harvest of which started January 2 and ended on June 23, is now estimated according to the Cuban Sugar Stabilization Institute as the third largest on record. A total of 5,652,000 short tons was produced, of which 4,751,000 tons was raw sugar, and 901,000 tons was in the form of invert molasses, the production of which was reported at 219 million gallons. In addition, 231 million gallons of blackstrap or final molasses were produced.

SECOND ESTIMATE OF MEXICAN SUGAR CROP

The 1943-44 Mexican sugarcane harvest is practically completed and the estimate of production is now placed at about 430,000 short tons of refined sugar, compared with 453,000 tons in 1942-43. This is slightly

below the earlier forecast of 457,000 tons, and is well below the estimated consumption requirements of 495,000 tons. A part of the deficit has already been imported or purchased, and arrangements are being made to obtain the remainder. Production of "piloncillo" is expected to be about the same as the estimated 144,000 tons in 1942-43. The chief reasons for the shorter crop were droughts in the States of Tamaulipas and Veracruz, floods and cyclones in the States of Sinaloa and Veracruz, volcanic eruptions in the State of Michoacan, frosts in the States of Jalisco and Puebla, shortage of transportation, and lack of repair parts for the mills, since the acreage of cane was about the same as in the previous season.

LIVESTOCK AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

IRISH EXPORTERS OF CATTLE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM DESIRE INCREASE IN PRICE

Irish exporters of cattle to the British Ministry of Food desire a price increase equivalent to the increase granted British farmers for home-produced fat stock. The Minister for Agriculture of Ireland has made representations to the British Ministry of Food for such an increase, and meanwhile the seasonal prices to be paid from July 3, 1944, to July 1, 1945, will be the same as those paid during the corresponding period of 1943-44. The new British price schedule announced in May 1944 represents an increase of approximately 0.4 cents a pound, live weight, above the 1943-44 prices.

HABANA CEILING PRICES FOR BEEF RAISED

The Cuban Office of Price Regulation and Supply recently raised its ceiling on beef prices in Habana. Its policy of holding down prices in that city in the interest of the consumer resulted in a long continued shortage of beef. Meanwhile a flourishing black market existed outside Habana, where ceiling prices were not enforced.

Demand for beef in rural areas during the past 4 months has been so great as to cause live-cattle prices to rise consider-

ably above the ceiling prices applicable for beef in Habana. Consumers in that city either went without beef or purchased it in the black market at prices ranging up to 50 cents a pound and more for ordinary cuts and \$1.00 a pound for tenderloin.

The shortage in Habana has continued despite various steps taken by the Government to alleviate the situation, such as the revocation of a fixed seasonal drop in price and the payment of a subsidy of one cent a pound to maintain slaughter-cattle prices in the city at 5.9 cents a pound. The only result was to force rural prices up to 6.4 cents a pound. The Government was then faced with the alternative of extending price control throughout the island or abandoning control in Habana. In effect, the latter was done by raising Habana prices to the levels prevailing throughout the island.

CUBA: New schedule of cattle and beef prices, with comparisons

ITEM	: PRICE PER POUND: PER-		
	: : ESTAB-: CENTAGE		
	: MAR. 8 : LISHED: IN-		
	: : AUG. 2: CREASE		
	: Cents	: Cents	: Percent
Live cattle, basis :	:	:	:
Camaguey	4.29	6.41	49
Beef wholesale, :	:	:	:
packer to butcher :	8.09	12.13	50
Beef retail - :	:	:	:
Grade 1	17.75	23.67	33
Grade 2 <u>a/</u>	12.82	19.72	54
Grade 3 <u>a/</u>	5.92	5.92	0

a/ Little beef actually is sold as Grade 2 and practically none as Grade 3.

CENTRAL BRAZILIAN PASTURES BETTER BUT CATTLE SHORT

Pastures in Central Brazil are in better condition than they have been in the past 2 years, but Brazilian agricultural authorities report a general shortage of cattle. According to them, the number of cattle in the States of São Paulo, Goyaz, and Matto Grosso is less than the latest official statistics show, because of the large number killed during the years 1937 through 1942 when beef exports greatly increased. Approximately 45 percent of the

total beef exports from Brazil originate in this area.

Government officials report that it is becoming increasingly difficult to buy feeder cattle in the States of Goyaz and Matto Grosso. Prospective buyers state that there is an increasing number of young cattle in these States, but they are not old enough for feeding and are high priced. Brazilian agricultural authorities reject the suggestion that many cattlemen have been holding for higher prices and state that if this were true, there would be larger numbers of older cattle in the country.

BUTTER SITUATION IN IRELAND

Statistics of butter production in Ireland in 1943 are as yet unavailable, but it is expected that it will be less than the 1942 production of 69 million pounds, and the 74 million pounds produced in 1940 and 1941.

The downward trend in creamery butter production during the past few years is attributed largely to war conditions and the

various restrictions imposed. Scarcity of cattle feed to supplement pastures has been felt for some time. Since prices in the British market are relatively high, many of the better animals are being exported to the United Kingdom. Special attention is being given to the breeding of cattle for beef purposes, with the result that butter and milk production is largely a byproduct. Current prices received for milk at creameries have caused dissatisfaction and are considered by some farmers as not sufficiently high to warrant the retention of cattle for dairy purposes. Much of the milk that would otherwise be used for butter production is now being retained by farmers for their own use.

Butter as a food has become a more important item in the diet of the people of Ireland since the supply of other fats has fallen to one-tenth of pre-war consumption. The dwindling of the butter supply has necessitated rationing this commodity to 6 ounces per person per week, and unless conditions affecting its production show improvement, a further reduction may become necessary.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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